



THIS WEEK IN IRAQ

The Official Newsletter of the Multi-National Force - Iraq

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November 12, 2007

Successful medical operation



Pvt. Racine Ramirez checks a patient's breathing during a recent cooperative medical engagement held in As Sanawah. The Iraqi Army and Coalition forces teamed to provide the residents with much needed medical care. Photo by Spc. Jamie Avila.

AS SANAWAH — Working side by side with the Iraqi Army (IA), Coalition forces recently provided medical assistance to more than 1,000 people in the Albu Ewhaid Village on the outskirts of As Sanawah.

"I think it went great. Our providers were working side by side with Iraqi Army doctors and medics to provide the proper medical care to the people in the village," said Capt. Assad Raza, a Fontana, Ca. native and the 1st Brigade Combat Team (BCT), 82nd Airborne Division medical planner.

The event showed the villagers and the IA 1st BCT's commitment to serving their medical needs.

"This is the first cooperative medical engagement (CME) we have done as a brigade since we got to Iraq and it was a dynamic event," said Doctor (Maj.) Michael Tarpey, a Chicago, Ill. native and the brigade surgeon for 1st BCT.

Due to the remote location of the village, limited medical care has been available to its citizens in the past.

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Troop surge, Iraqis' anger puts al Qaeda on the run

WASHINGTON — A combination of unceasing pressure by U.S. and Iraqi security forces and citizens' anger at al Qaeda in Iraq's brutal tactics have put the terror group "on the run," a senior U.S. military officer said.

"The surge in operations centered in Baghdad and the surrounding belts and up in the Diyala River Valley have driven much of al Qaeda into the rural areas and has caused them to flee northward," Navy Rear Adm. Gregory J. Smith, a Multi-National Force-Iraq spokesman, told reporters at a Baghdad news conference last week.

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Maj. Gen. Rich Lynch, 3rd Infantry Division commander, center, walks the streets of Hawr Rajab with Col. Terry Ferrell, far right, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Inf. Div. commander, Sheikh Ali, to Lynch's left, and Sheikh Mahir, to Lynch's right, Nov. 7. Photo by Sgt. Jason Stadel, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division Public Affairs.

Marne commander sees progress

HAWR RAJAB — Four months ago, a U.S. or Iraqi Soldier walking the streets of Hawr Rajab would have likely sparked a battle. The city was dominated by al-Qaida, the streets lined with improvised explosive devices.

Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch, MND-C commanding general, walked the streets of Hawr Rajab Nov. 7, witnessing firsthand the dramatic improvement in the city's security.

With the Concerned Local Citizens (CLC) groups fighting insurgents and aiding U.S. Soldiers, the threat of al-Qaida has dropped considerably. An Iraqi Army (IA) mechanized company was added to help secure the community.

Iraqis setting aside sectarian differences has also helped secure the area. Sunnis and Shias are working together to fight al-

Qaida, their true enemy. The change hasn't gone unnoticed by U.S. forces.

"We're unique here," said Capt. Chad Klacius, commander, Troop A, 1st Battalion, 40th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, currently attached to the 2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. "The Sunni (CLCs) and Shia IA are working together; this is something that has helped us to secure the city."

Klacius spearheaded the CLC program about four months ago when he began working closely with a local leader named Sheikh Ali, who is now the leader of the Hawr Rajab CLCs. The group has grown to (445) members.

Ali, a Sunni, told Lynch that working

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Sunni, Shia sheiks present a united front

CAMP STRIKER — A short-notice reconciliation meeting of regional sheiks with potential for impact throughout Iraq was held Nov. 8 in Al Bassam, an area approximately 16 kilometers west of Baghdad city center.

The conference was called by a highly influential leader, Abu Maruf, with less than 24-hours notice, to make a public declaration of unity amongst the tribes against al-Qaeda and to map the way ahead for their region.

"We were notified of the meeting at about 8 p.m. the night before," said Lt. Col. Brian Coppersmith, commander of War Rakkasans, 1st Squadron, 33rd Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). "We weren't sure why the conference was being called on such short notice. We have learned that things move fast when they are this good."

Coppersmith was invited by Abu Maruf to observe the event.

Members of more than 30 tribes attended the conference; both Sunnis and Shias were represented. Their differences were set aside for the day as they publicly united with one voice and vowed to fight al-Qaeda and work toward a lasting peace for their region.

Maruf facilitated the conference and

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Operations Update



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